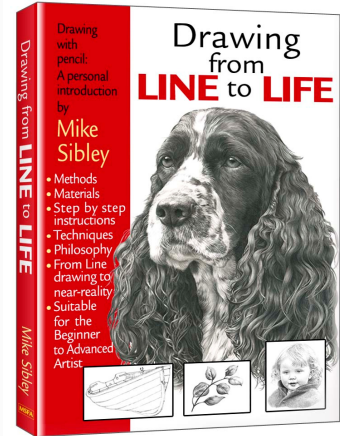


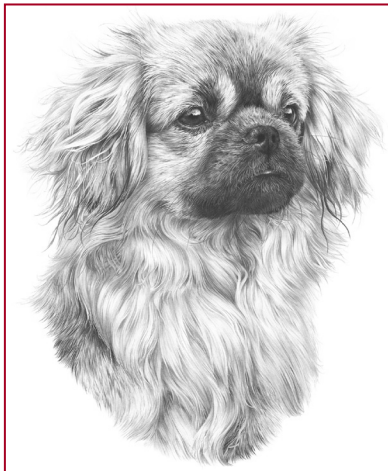
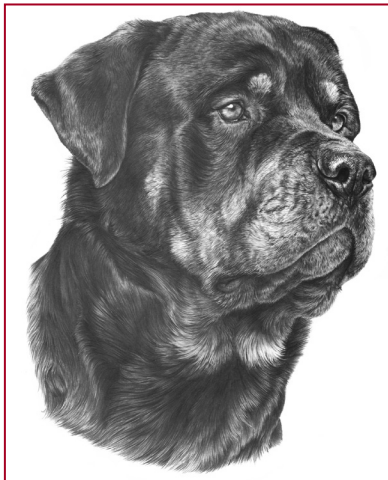


*Drawspace.com
is honoured to
introduce*

***Mike
Sibley***



One of the world's few professional graphite pencil artists, art educator, and author of the drawing bible ***Drawing from Line to Life***.



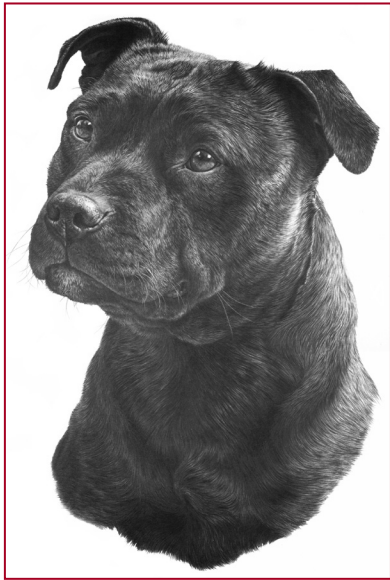
My art, book, and teaching

When I first began my art career I was often astonished to find more experienced artists treating every technique as a “trade secret” and divulging little. I determined at that time not to emulate them but to be free with encouragement and advice.

I've been drawing professionally since 1980 and I've learned a lot in that time, so “Why” I ask myself “should I expect less-experienced artists to have to learn those lessons the hard way, when I can provide short-cuts from my own experience?” I can't think of a single reason. And little gives me more pleasure than to see a novice artist take a giant step forward.

I used my tutorials at SibleyFineArt.com to pass on some of my knowledge and in early 2006 I released my book “Drawing from Line to Life”. As a result of the many requests I received from purchasers of my book for personal tuition, I began to run UK workshops. A year later I ran a 5-day workshop in West Yellowstone, Montana, and I now hold workshops in both the UK and USA.

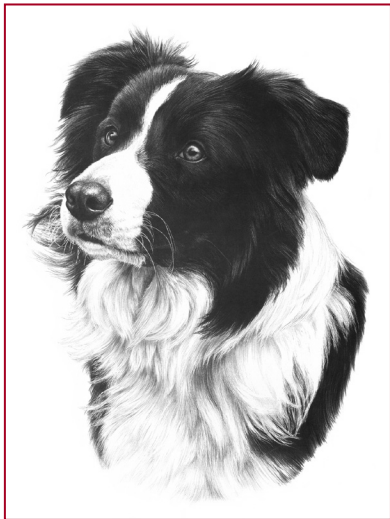
I consider myself a near-Realist – my aim in my work is to emphasise character, tell a story, display the intricacies of the subject's creation, and to draw in a manner that suggests a reality while still maintaining the feel of a hand-drawn work of art.



Realism in drawing brings out the Sherlock Holmes in you. No longer can you walk down a country lane without observing the variety of wildlife and weeds; you'll appreciate the variety of leaves and the insect life that lives upon them; the way Ivy clings to tree bark; and notice the upturned wingtips of the Crows that fly overhead. Even in your own home, you can't help studying the myriad patterns of reflected light that appear on your shiny kettle or toaster.

I feel compelled to display even the smallest detail to viewers of my work, as if to say, "Do you see this? Do you really see this? Isn't it beautiful, this marvel of Nature?" And if I feel just one person has finally been encouraged to "see" instead of look, I'll have done my job.

My best work always results from drawing something that inspires me or presents a challenge. Sometimes it's the overall study that challenges, or perhaps it's an element within the study, such as water, mist, a bicycle... I think it's true to say that every drawing now has at least one challenging element within it – I'm not a drawing machine, and challenge keeps my work fresh.



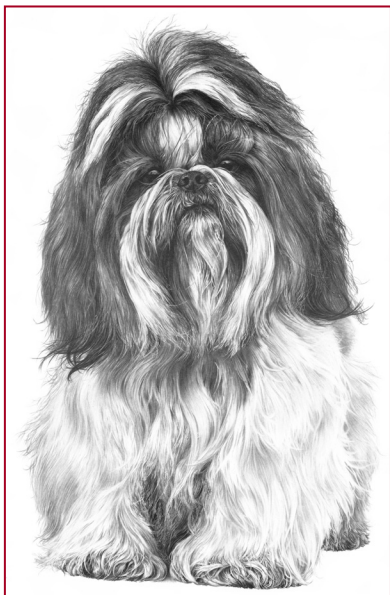
Mike Sibley Dip.A.D.
biography

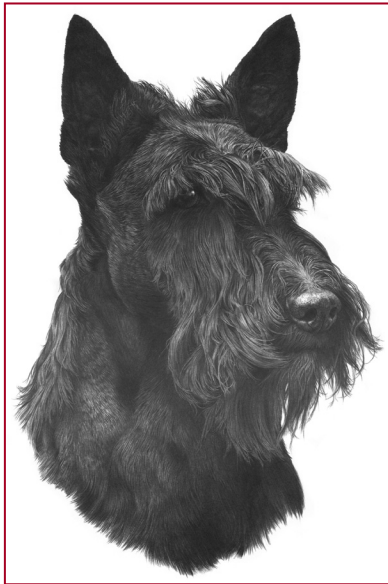
The short version

English artist Mike Sibley has been a professional graphite pencil specialist since 1980. His well-known prints of dog studies can be found as far afield as Australia to South Africa, and Europe to the USA.

From 1980 to 1989 Mike drew over 50 head-studies of dogs - an open edition range of prints that many believe to be the definitive collection. Each meticulous drawing took an average of 85 hours to complete. At that time Mike was the top canine artist in the UK and his publisher was selling over 20,000 prints a year worldwide.

In 1990, Mike switched to drawing and self-publishing limited edition prints, featuring dogs in their environments.

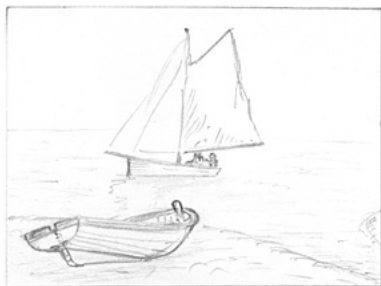




The first print, an Irish Water Spaniel composition, was released at Crufts and sold out in less than 3½ hours. Mike will often spend over two hundred hours on a single drawing, and he is renowned for his fine detail and careful observation.

In 2000 Mike set up his popular website - SibleyFineArt.com - and began writing online tutorials to help less-experienced graphite pencil artists. These tutorials grew into his book "Drawing from Line to Life", which many artists consider to be their drawing bible.

Mike hosts his own Animal and Wildlife forum at ArtPapa.com, set up Starving-Artists.net for aspiring artists, runs Drawing Workshops in both the UK and USA, and is now a tutor here at Drawspace.



Pencil drawing from around 1958

History – the long version (get sandwiches and a drink!)

I'm often asked how I came to find pencil was the best medium for me... This could be a long story and with more than one starting point but I'll do my best.

My father occasionally drew and nearly always used pencil, as he is red/green colour-blind. Two of his drawings are forever stuck in my mind (a pony and foal, and my grandparents' house) and I'm convinced that these play a large part.

Pencil does everything that I ask of it. I am not a fan of colour. I believe the lack of colour in pencil work forces the eye to look deeper into the image – the eye can scan over a painting and pick up sufficient information to satisfy it just from the shapes, tones and hues of the colour alone.

Pencil, by stripping away the familiar outer covering, demands a much closer inspection. In short, colour can get in the way of real perception.

I've drawn for as long as I can remember – sometimes in colour but more often in pencil or ballpoint pen. I must have driven some of my teachers to despair, as I'd often spend a half hour writing a homework essay and then an hour drawing a ballpoint illustration.

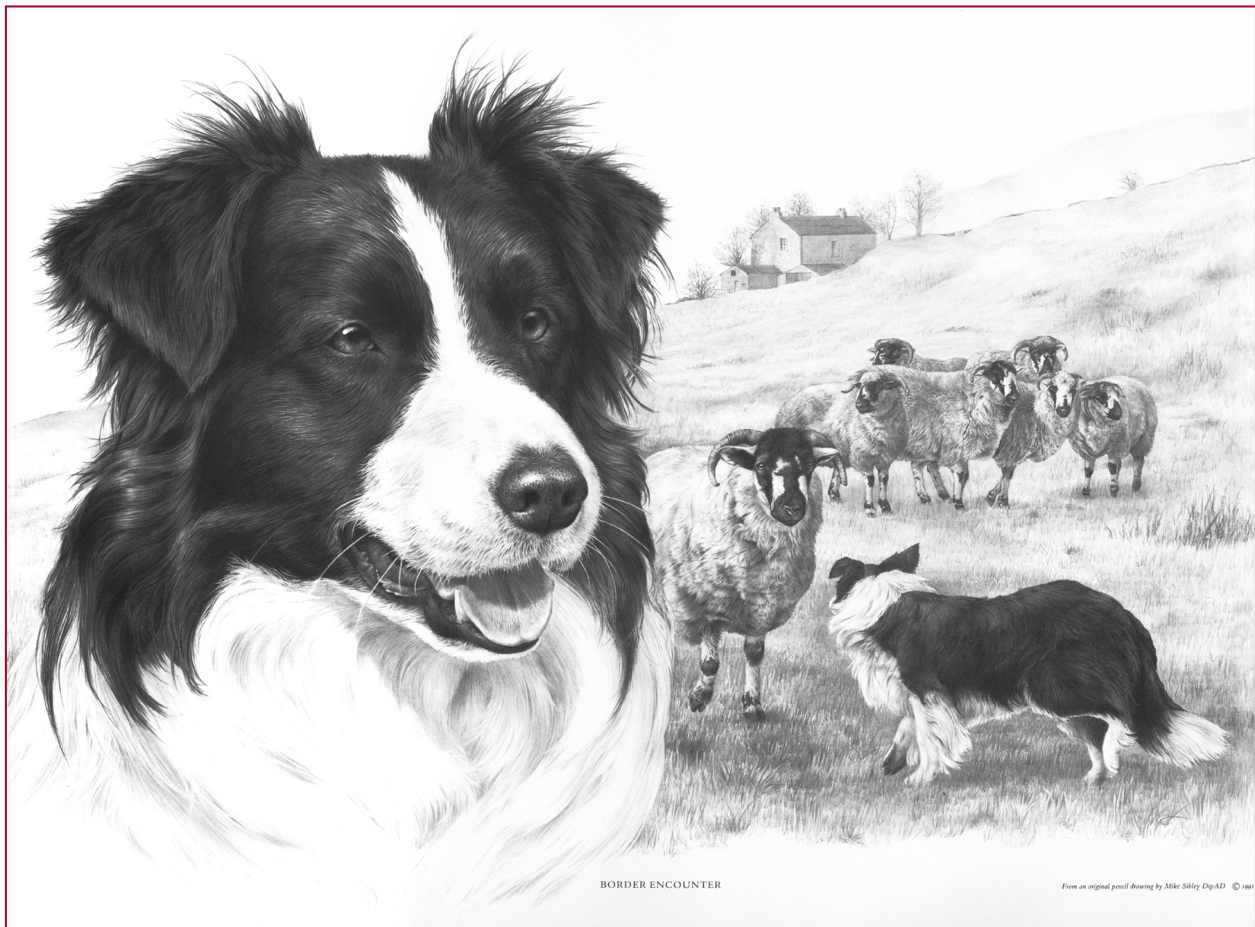


Ballpoint pen drawing from 1964

I attended Leeds College of Art and Design where I drew and painted in about equal measures, although most of my work in the final two years involved electronic music rather than representational art. I left with a Dip.A.D. (Diploma in Art & Design) for Fine Art, which later became the BA Honours degree.

From there I tried every job in the universe (often two or three at the same time) and never found anything I was remotely interested in - mainly because I prefer to work for myself.

When I was managing a small frozen food wholesale business in Cheshire, I met my wife Jenny who was the manageress of the company's retail shop.





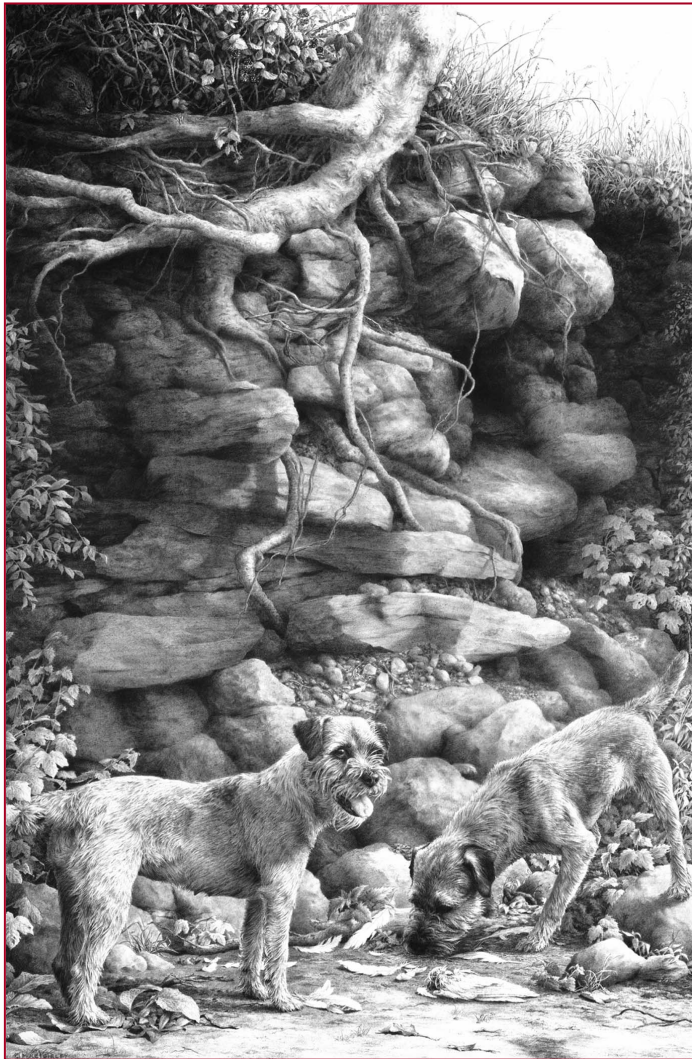
To cut a long story short, we moved to Yorkshire, I was snowed off work and Jenny wanted head studies of the three breeds of dogs she was breeding and exhibiting – Yorkshire Terriers, Pomeranians and Italian Greyhounds.

So the following morning I picked up an old pencil and a sheet of typing paper and began drawing. The results were fairly basic but I was hooked. I drew one head study a day every day for three weeks.



Every evening I produced the line drawing for the next day's work and every morning I was eager to start.





Jenny never did get her drawings, but her friends began to commission me.

I started to attend small craft shows and dog shows, and the business grew from there.

I was a taxi-driver at that time and I gradually switched lives – I worked the 2pm to 2am shift to release more daylight hours.

Then I sold my car and worked three consecutive weekend shifts (10am Saturday right through to 2pm Sunday).

Finally in 1980, I stopped taxi-driving altogether; I decided to not renew my licence. This marked the start of my career as a professional artist.





I began printing from the occasional study and sold them at craft shows and from a couple of local dog-grooming establishments.

Then I attended a Christmas Craft Fair near Leeds where I met "Butterfly Bill". Bill was selling mounted exotic butterflies and had recently started selling dog prints too – newly redundant from his job; he was looking for an opportunity and found me.

He took over the marketing of my head studies leaving me to concentrate on increasing the range of breeds.

I produced 52 breeds before I grew tired of always working at the same scale and moved into Limited Edition prints, which I self-publish.





Our home



Ernie the Shetland pony and behind him, carved into the hillside, is the White Horse of Kilburn.

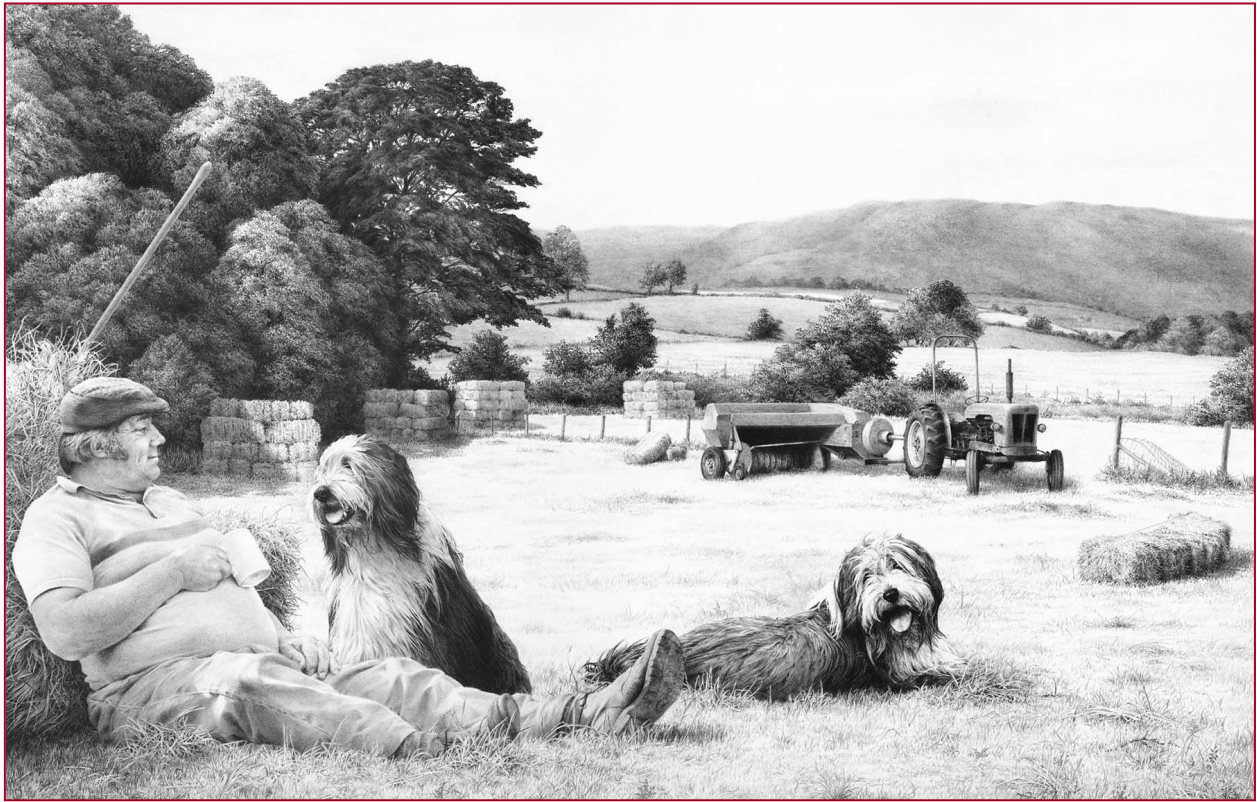
Amy, the mother of our Parson Russell Terrier pups – including my dog, Buster.

Much of the scenery around us appears in my work. You can tell when we moved to the Vale of York, because the dry-stone walls in my drawings became hedges!

To bring you up to date, Jenny and I now live one mile down a farm track near Thirsk, North Yorkshire in England.

We have a 4-acre smallholding that is home to our six dogs (a German Shepherd and five Parson Russell Terriers), Shetland Ponies, two horses, a goat, three cats, poultry and our last remaining Manx Loghtan ewe. And we have a building (destined to become my DVD studio) full of Guinea Pigs and Chinchillas.





Done Balin' - The fields behind our house with the Hambleton Hills in the distance.



Early Morn at Witton Marsh - Based on the field in front of our house after the flood of 2000.



Sutton Farm Sunday -

The nearest farm to us, with
carts added from a local
agricultural show.



***My
Granddaughter
Charlotte***

You can view more of Mike's work at:

<http://www.SibleyFineArt.com/galleries.htm>

Read reviews and a page from each chapter of "Drawing from Line to Life" at:

<http://www.SibleyFineArt.com/pencil-drawing-book.htm>

Visit Mike's online drawing and other tutorials at:

<http://www.SibleyFineArt.com/tipsndx.htm>

Check current workshop dates and locations at:

<http://www.SibleyFineArt.com/workshop.htm>

And visit Mike's Starving-Artists free and subscription art gallery site at:

<http://www.Starving-Artists.net>

